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ABSTRACT

The paper describes a collaborative program between a private non-profit agency providing services to the retarded and a local college in which a college faculty member used his sabbatical to provide training and clinical support to agency staff. A needs assessment of the 12 teachers and 24 teaching assistants involved resulted in identifying the following content of the inservice presentations: behavior management, behavioral objectives, normal child growth and development, retarded development, curriculum development and models, evaluation of students, learning theories, teaching techniques, working with parents and related professionals, and the role of play. The inservice program included a mixture of lectures, discussion, role playing, and self-instruction. Classroom visits by the visiting faculty member provided ongoing support. The program's benefits for the agency included improved staff competence and, for the faculty member, hands-on experience in applied settings. Guidelines for establishing such collaborative programs are offered covering funding sources, the job description of the faculty member, and ongoing needs assessment. (DB)

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Collaborative Efforts of Service Delivery Agencies, Colleges, and Universities

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Paper presented at the American Association on Mental Retardation
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COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS OF SERVICE DELIVERY AGENCIES.

Introduction

In a recent editorial in **Mental Retardation** Rowitz (1987) described two cultures of mental retardation, a service culture and a research and academic culture, each of which is in conflict with the other. He suggested ways in which the gap between the two might be bridged, an example of which is the collaboration between a service delivery agency and an institution of higher education.

The practice of the sabbatical is long-standing in higher education. It has traditionally been used by a faculty member for study and research. While faculty are relieved of formal course loads, many opt to remain in a campus setting engaged in research. Unfortunately, no matter how extensive a teacher educator's previous direct experience in special education, the academic environment may tend to insulate the person from contact with individuals with handicapping conditions. As described here the sabbatical has as its focus a remedy for this insulation. The purpose of the sabbatical becomes reality testing of solutions generated by study and research to the everyday problems of service delivery in special education.

The Shield Institute's commitment to inservice education and supervision of its staff was supported by providing the opportunity for a faculty member of the Special Education Department of Cardinal Stritch College to spend a year providing training and clinical support to Shield Institute staff. Cardinal Stritch College recognized this use of the concept of the sabbatical as a valid vehicle

for increasing a faculty member's knwoledge, skill and competence.

The program described here is offered as a prototype for agency/higher education relationships. Results of such an affiliation include better quality service delivery to agency clients, better preparation for college students who are prospective special education teachers and an onportunity for college faculty to improve their level of instruction. The collaborative project described was developed by the Shield Institute for the Mentally Retarded and Developmentally Disabled of New York, NY and Cardinal Stritch College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The Shield Institute is a private, non-profit agency which has had an ongoing history of providing services to meet human needs. It was founded in 1921 as a child-care facility for homeless children. In 1954 it began educational and clinical services for school-aged children with mental retardation. Subsequently pre-school and home-based intervention programs were begun. Later pre-vocational and vocational programs were begun for mentally retarded teenagers. In the 1980's an adult day treatment program and a work skills/socialization program were begun for adults, as well as a Saturday respite care program. Presently three programs are in the development stage: a program for elderly persons with mental retardation; a program for those who are multiply handicapped and non-verbal; and a work transition program.

Shield Institute staff providing direct services to students is comprised of teachers and teacher assistants. As

a private, non-profit agency, it cannot offer teachers salaries comparable to those of the New York City system or of the surrounding affluent suburbs. Therefore, the teachers hired are frequently inexperienced and the turnover rate is high. Figure 1 shows the number of currently employed teachers by year hired and Figure 2 their educational backgrounds. On the other hand the teacher assistants, because they are recruited by-and-large from the neighboring community tend to be a rather stable group. Figure 3 shows the number of current teacher assistants by year hired.

Cardinal Stritch College offers bachelors and masters level preparation for teachers of students who are mentally retarded, learning disabled, or emotionally disturbed; for teachers of preschool aged exceptional children; and in the area of special religious education.

Needs Assessment

Given the staffing pattern, the interest of the agency in providing staff development and the availability of a college faculty member the first step in bridging the gap between the two cultures of mental retardation was to identify the present competency levels of the staff and to assess their needs for further training.

Traditionally the selection of inservice topics has been determined by and limited to what a trainer chooses to offer at any given time. This approach is inadequate. Rather, staff members' present level of competence ought to dictate inservice content. Identification of present

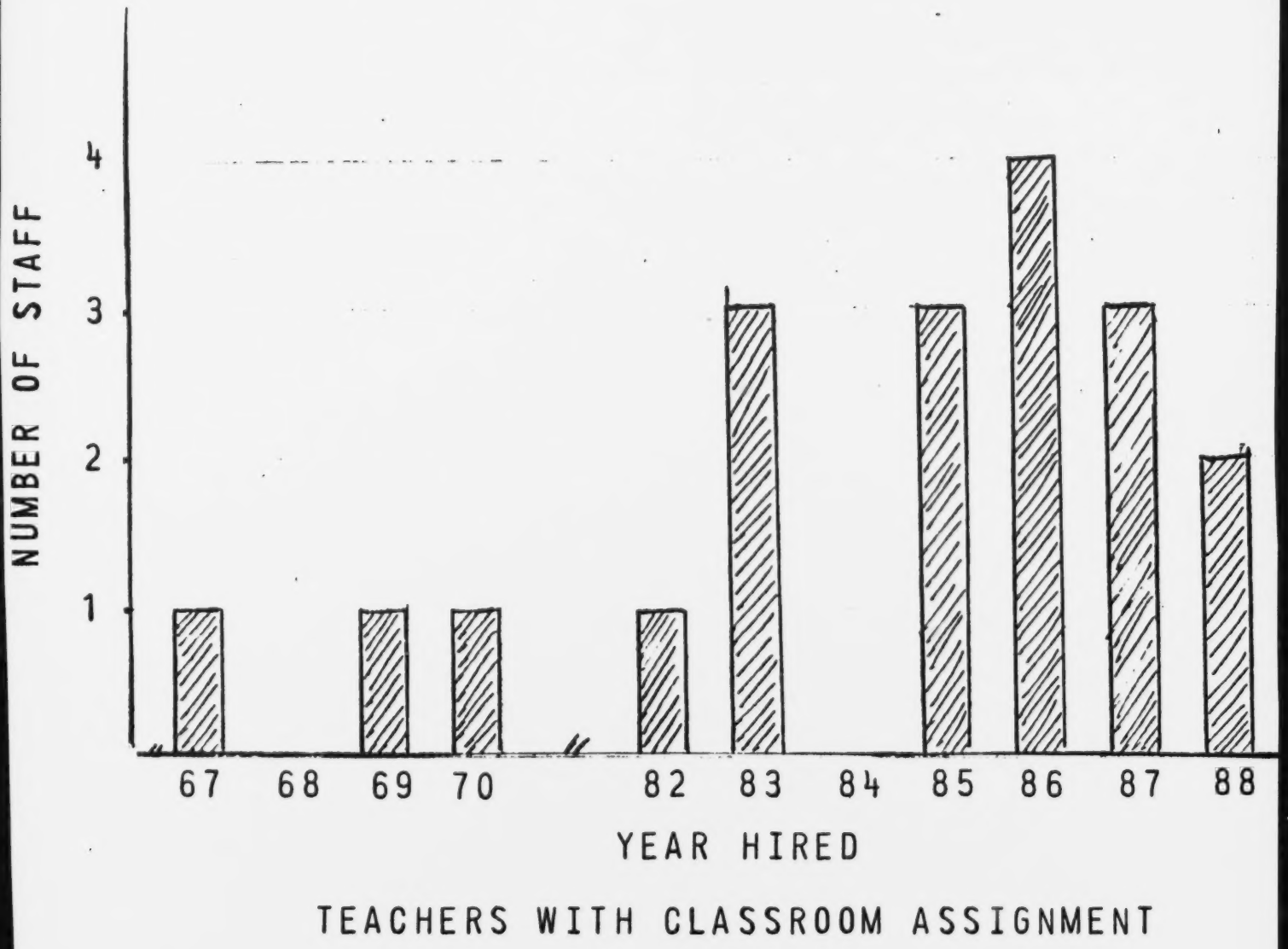
NUMBER OF STAFF
4
3
2
1
67
68
69
70
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
YEAR HIRED
TEACHERS WITH CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENT

FIGURE 1

CLASSROOM TEACHERS' EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

DEGREE	# OF STAFF
BA (NON-ED FIELD)	2
BA (EARLY CHILDHOOD)	2
BA (EARLY CHILDHOOD AND SP. ED.)	2
BA (SP. ED.)	5
MA (SP. ED. AND EARLY CHILDHOOD)	3
MA (SP. ED. AND NON-ED FIELD)	5

FIGURE 2

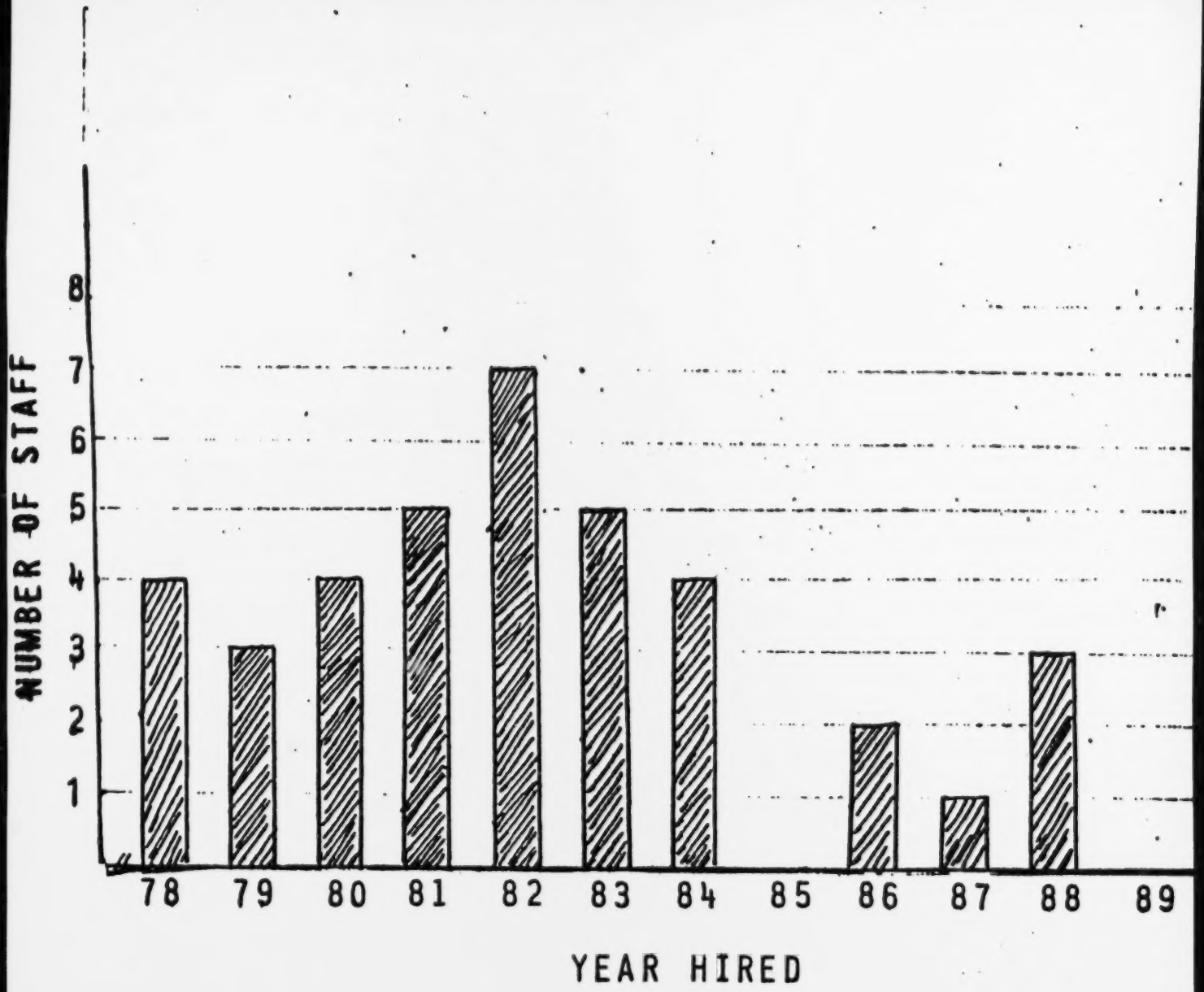

FIGURE 3 - ASST. TEACHERS WITH CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENT

competency levels requires development of an adequate needs assessment. Needs assessment is critical for the following reasons: 1) larger numbers of personnel exist than can be trained at any one time; 2) each agency has unique local characteristics; 3) the range of possible competencies to be addressed is vast; and 4) availability of appropriate training resources is limited. Personal self-evaluation can be considered a valid form of needs assessment. Inservice plans based on self-evaluation follow from the principle of maximum participation of those affected by a decision in the making of that decision.

The needs assessment designed for use in the present collaborative effort tapped knowledge and skills identified in learning system design (Davis, Alexander & Yelon, 1974), in the writing of Madeline Hunter on effective teaching (1971, 1969, 1967a, 1967b, 1967c) and the special education literature. Respondents were asked to rate their knowledge and skills according to their perceived need for information/training in each area identified.

One needs assessment instrument as administered to twelve teachers who participated in the inservice program. Two different instruments were used for the twenty-four teacher assistants involved; ten received the same assessment as the teachers had completed and fourteen received an alternate form. Two forms were used for the teacher assistants based on information provided by their immediate supervisors as to their backgrounds and skills.

The content identified for inclusion in the initial inservice presentations was: behavior management;

behavioral objectives; normal child growth and development; retarded development; curriculum development and models, eg. functional curriculum; evaluation of students--familiarity with assessment tools, techniques of informal assessment and observation, interpretation of results; learning theories; teaching techniques--lesson planning, motivation, task analysis; working with parents and related professionals; and the role of play.

Models of Inservice

Analyzing the needs assessment data led to two decisions. The first had to do with the content of the inservice training as described above and the second with models chosen for delivering the content. It was decided to address the topics in order of identified priority. Although this approach resulted in some loss of logical continuity it demonstrated a commitment to meeting identified needs.

With the content identified it was clear that there was a need for a systematic approach to developing and field testing a model for the inservice training. A primary task was to adopt an appropriate local inservice training plan which included content, training methods, and planning procedures. The Wisconsin Cooperative Planning Committee on Personnel Preparation in Handicapped Education (1978) provided such a model.

In accordance with the model inservice education is directly applicable to the work setting using what is known about the modification of adult behavior. Adults most often

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS OF SERVICE DELIVERY AGENCIES,

have well developed schemas for coping with the world as they perceive it. Since these schemas have been reinforced over time they are difficult to change. This is particularly true when training is directed toward changing a way of thinking. In attempting to change adult ways of thinking and acting, research (Clasen, 1979) identifies a relationship between the type of intervention used and its effect. Figure 4 illustrates this relationship.

FIGURE 4

RELATIONSHIP OF INSERVICE MODEL AND OUTCOME

INTERVENTION	EFFECT
Telling/media presentation	Affective response
Interactive/discussion	Clarification of rationale
Role playing	Acquisition of specific skills
Simulation	Acquisition of complex pattern
On-the-job support	Critical appraisal of behavior

Lecture

Probably the easiest type of inservice to design is that which is expected to produce an affective response. The responsibility of the designer is to select (via needs assessment) the desired response and to find an effective speaker or media piece to produce the desired impact. One speaker can reach out to dozens, even hundreds, of persons simultaneously. Media presentations are even more reliable than speakers, because they perform consistently over time.

A stirring lecture will produce an affective response. There will be a surge of feeling which may or may not result in a concommittant behavior change. It is only when an opportunity to practice a desired behavior is available that the behavior is likely to be incorporated into the behavioral repertoire. It is generally unlikely that a lecture, no matter how stirring, will produce a great measure of behavioral change.

The format of an inservice should be calibrated to the outcome desired. If the inservice is to provide information with little expectation of behavioral change, a lecture is an excellent choice. It would be extraordinarily costly and unnecessary to provide on-the-job dispensing of knowledge. On the other hand it is naive to expect a lecture to modify a relatively complex set of behaviors.

Discussion

If the desired level of response is precision in understanding exactly what is expected and what the implications of a change might be, an interactive component is necessary. This might take the form of programmed materials, a discussion or a response form which provides for follow-up. Interactive inservice models increase the amount of preplanning required. In many instances, interactive methodologies will limit the number of persons a single trainer can deal with effectively.

Role playing

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If the goal of training is to change a pattern of behavior or introduce a behavior or repertoire of behaviors, it is necessary to move to more engaging models of inservice. Role playing requires the isolation of a specific behavior or set of behaviors and provision of the opportunity to practice them appropriately in a psychologically safe environment. Role playing models severely limit the number of persons who can be dealt with effectively by any one resource person in a fixed amount of time. They also require an extended period of time for appropriate practice.

Simulation

Simulation allows participants the opportunity to learn how to diagnose situations and develop appropriate responses. Complex behavioral sets can be acquired through participation in carefully prepared and managed simulations. A key problem for simulations is the amount of lead time required to develop the materials needed in a simulation. In addition, simulations are best executed in relatively small group situations, although complex simulations may allow for larger groups. The advantagbe that simulations have over role playing is that they admit of the complexity that obtains in most real life situations.

On-the-job support

Finally, if complex behavioral sets are to be introduced, sustained and improved it is necessary to provide continued, consistent and ongoing support on the

job. The support can take the form of supervision, consultancy, or a staff member acting as a resource person. A unique form of on-the-job support can be obtained via micro-teaching using the medium of television. Teacher centers and classroom exchanges also provide on-the-job support. While on the job support can be very efficacious, it is expensive, generally slow to show broad results and is susceptable to problems.

The Collaboration

The local inservice plan which was developed for the participating Shield Institute staff included a mixture of lecture, discussion, role playing and self-instruction. Sessions were scheduled separately for teachers and teacher assistants. In addition administrative units were trained separately making a total of four groups. By dividing participants in this way, it was possible to keep all groups smaller than fifteen participants. Inservice sessions were held weekly for fifty to sixty minutes, either after school dismissal (The union contract specified the number of times staff could be required to participate in after-school inservice programs.) or by providing released time during the school day.

Since priorities differed across the four groups the sequence and selection of topics differed for each group except that behavior management was the highest priority topic across all four groups. The method of presentation for a given topic was consistent across groups and each session ended with an evaluation of the inservice. Various

evaluation formats were used and sample of these can be found in Appendix A.

Inservice sessions were coupled with ongoing support to the teachers. Classroom visits were made by the Cardinal Stritch College faculty member whose job title was Assistant Educational Supervisor. These visits were made at the invitation of the Unit Coordinator and/or the individual teacher. They most often focused on individual children, generally those demonstrating behavioral problems or newly admitted children. Follow-up to the visit might include the development of a behavioral program, the convening of a case conference, conferencing with the individual teacher or participating in a home visit. As the faculty member became familiar with the agency's professional library and curriculum resources she was also able to access materials for teachers and to match available materials to teacher needs. Examples of bibliographies developed are found in Appendix B.

Outcomes

The cooperation between the agency and the higher education institution resulted in benefits both to the Shield Institute and to Cardinal Stritch College. For agency staff the program had the psychological effect of increasing morale, providing an intellectual challenge, and supplying the opportunity to share new ideas and points of view. The Unit Coordinator's scope of responsibility was reduced as the teachers and teacher assistants had available another person as a resource and consultant. The faculty

member set up a small but up-to-date library and reference center.

The most important outcome for the agency was improved staff competence. Evaluations indicated that the teachers and teacher assistants who participated in the inservice program perceived it as of professional value to them.

Cardinal Stritch College's special education program gained from the experience of the faculty member. On occasion she did educational assessment of an incoming student, participated in referral/placement conferences with local school district personnel and worked with other personnel in the development of a preschool curriculum in the area of human sexuality. These opportunities to work in applied settings provided direct experience with the student population and with the service delivery system with which special education teachers in training would deal.

The faculty member prepared written materials including background reading related to the inservice topics, bibliographies, materials lists and data forms of various kinds. This activity required her to become familiar with the most current literature in the field and to apply research findings "hands on." It can be argued that keeping current is as easily done in the academic setting but administrative and other responsibilities (committee work, advising, etc.) often erode the time available for course development and class preparation. The materials generated during the agency stay can also be used in course presentations at the college.

The agency also provided facility-wide inservice on a regular basis. Usually outside experts were invited to share their ideas about a particular topic--functional curriculum, current research in communication and language development, etc. The faculty member attended these as a participant thereby increasing her own knowledge and skills. She was also then able to help staff implement innovations in their own classrooms.

Guidelines for Establishing Collaborative Planning

Funding sources

This cooperative venture was not without its problems. From the perspective of the agency the first of these is funding. In the present example some use was made of PL89-313 flow-through funds to cover the added costs of the programs described.

Job description

A second is the job title and job description of the faculty member. Is the person to be a colleague of the teachers or an administrator? Also, when a faculty member wishes to enter an agency it is necessary to match the needs of the agency with the needs and expertise of the person. Once on board the agency must limit the persons's responsibilities by prioritizing its needs. The faculty member should be paired with one of the agency's administrators who can be a facilitator and provide support.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS OF SERVICE DELIVERY AGENCIES,

Despite enthusiasm of the agency's administration at every level a faculty member can remain an "outsider" because her commitment to the students is time-limited. It is also possible that a person coming out of higher education for a predetermined time might not invest him/herself in the job. Because the faculty member stands outside the agency's organizational flow chart, there may be communication probblems--not receiving pertinent information because sharing it is no one's specific responsibility on the one hand and not knowing to whom to report on the other. These problems, however, can be solved with commitment to the concept of cooperation by both parties and with trial-and-error over time.

Future planning for ongoing cooperation includes a concern for continuity. Especially if subsequently faculty come from different institutions it would be important that they share the common vision of the agency's mission. On the other hand, as there is turnover of staff at the agency, it is important that a core of information be shared with new staff as well. Some inservice topics need to be repeated--and repeated--while new ones are developed. Since data regarding inservice attendance can be stored by computer, information about which staff members participated in any particular inservice can be easily made available.

Ongoing needs assessment can be done at the end of each school year, the results compiled and used to plan subsequent staff development and training. For example, at the Shield Institute the following schedule of inservices was identified for the coming school year: management;

designing a classroom; developing classroom routines; observing behavior; facilitating adaptive behavior; fine motor development; use of sensory materials; math for young children; prerequisite skills for writing; play; augmentative communication; prerequisite skills for teaching reading; sensory integration; children with processing problems; and creative arts.

To alleviate the communication problem, it might be helpful for the faculty member to attend regular unit coordinators' meetings and unit meetings. A more specific job description may be developed. In fact, in the second year of the program the person who came in was given a more defined set of responsibilities. Also, other roles and responsibilities might be explored. These could include supervision of physical therapy and speech therapy interns given the necessary expertise on her part.

The model of agency/college cooperation described here is workable. The experience of the Shield Institute has sensitized the entire agency to an even greater concern for staff development. New initiatives being implemented include team teaching by teachers with different instructional styles, the assignment of beginning teachers to more experienced colleagues, and the use of in-house staff for inservice presentations. In addition, a more specific model for teacher supervision has been adopted.

Cardinal Stritch College, for its part, continues its involvement with field-based activities. Through its Professional Inservice Bureau faculty are available to provide inservice course work on site in public schools,

private schools, and agencies. These are funded in a variety of ways ranging from charging reduced tuition rates and granting graduate credit to soliciting federal funding to approaching private philanthropic foundations.

Long term commitment by schools and agencies to models similar to the one described in this document can bridge the gap between the two cultures of mental retardation.

APPENDIX A

EVALUATION OF INSERVICE

; Please respond to the following statements:

Key: 5= strongly agree; 4=agree; 3-uncertain; 2=disagree; 1=strongly disagree

1. The program had clearly stated objectives. _____
2. The learning objectives were adequately covered. _____
3. I feel I have increased my knowledge of the topics discussed. _____
4. The presenter(s) were knowledgeable. _____
5. The content of the program was of value to me. _____
6. The format of the program was conducive to the learning objectives. _____
7. I can apply information learned in the program. _____
8. Overall I was pleased with the quality of the program. _____

Comments:

The Shield Institute
for the
Mentally Retarded and Developmentally Disabled

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Training Session Response Sheet

Date _____

Job Title _____ Facility _____

Training Topic _____

Trainer(s) _____

Circle one response for each question

1. Overall, how would you rate this training session?

   1 very interesting 2 3 somewhat interesting 4 of no 5 interest

   If rated 4 or 5, why? _____

2. To what extent did the information meet your needs and expectations?

   1 fully 2 3 somewhat 4 5 not at all

   If rated 4 or 5, why? _____

3. How would you rate the organization of the material presented in this training session?

   1 well organized 2 3 somewhat organized 4 5 not organized

   If rated 4 or 5, why? _____

4. How would you rate the content covered in this training session?

   a just right b too easy c too difficult

5. How would you like to participate in a follow-up to this training session?

   a Yes b No

Other comments or suggestions to improve this training session

_____

(Use reverse side if more space is needed)

THE SHIELD INSTITUTE FOR THE MENTALLY
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INSERVICE SESSION
EVALUATION FORM

TO WHAT EXTENT DO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS REFLECT YOUR EVALUATION OF THIS PRESENTATION:

1.	The presentation was well organized	5 4 3 2 1 0
2.	The presentation was interesting	5 4 3 2 1 0
3.	The content was professionally relevant	5 4 3 2 1 0
4.	The content will be professionally useful	5 4 3 2 1 0
5.	The materials distributed will be useful	5 4 3 2 1 0
6.	The visual aids enhanced the presentation	5 4 3 2 1 0
7.	The presentation should have been longer	5 4 3 2 1 0

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE PRESENTATION ON A SCALE OF:
1(poor) to 5(excellent). Circle one..... 1 2 3 4 5

Additional comments and/or suggestions.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!!

EVALUATION OF INSERVICE

1. What do you consider the most important things you learned in this session?

2. What were the high and low points for you?

   High:

   Low:

3. As a result of this session what things do you think you will do differently?

4. Generally, how did you feel about the program?

5. Further comments:

APPENDIX A

EVALUATION OF INSERVICE

Please respond to the following statements:

Key: 5= strongly agree; 4=agree; 3-uncertain; 2=disagree; 1=strongly disagree

1. The program had clearly stated objectives. _____
2. The learning objectives were adequately covered. _____
3. I feel I have increased my knowledge of the topics discussed. _____
4. The presenter(s) were knowledgeable. _____
5. The content of the program was of value to me. _____
6. The format of the program was conducive to the learning objectives. _____
7. I can apply information learned in the program. _____
8. Overall I was pleased with the quality of the program. _____

Comments:

The Shield Institute
for the
Mentally Retarded and Developmentally Disabled

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Training Session Response Sheet

Date _____

Job Title _____ Facility _____

Training Topic _____

Trainer(s) _____

Circle one response for each question

1. Overall, how would you rate this training session?

   1 2 3 4 5
   very interesting somewhat interesting of no interest

   If rated 4 or 5, why?_____

2. To what extent did the information meet your needs and expectations?

   1 2 3 4 5
   fully somewhat not at all

   If rated 4 or 5, why?_____

3. How would you rate the organization of the material presented in this training session?

   1 2 3 4 5
   well organized somewhat organized not organized

   If rated 4 or 5, why?_____

4. How would you rate the content covered in this training session?

   a just right b too easy c too difficult

5. How would you like to participate in a follow-up to this training session?

   a Yes b No

Other comments or suggestions to improve this training session

_____

(Use reverse side if more space is needed)

THE SHIELD INSTITUTE FOR THE MENTALLY
RETARDED AND DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

INSERVICE SESSION
EVALUATION FORM

TO WHAT EXTENT DO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS REFLECT YOUR EVALUATION OF THIS PRESENTATION:

1.	The presentation was well organized	5 4 3 2 1 0
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4.	The content will be professionally useful	5 4 3 2 1 0
5.	The materials distributed will be useful	5 4 3 2 1 0
6.	The visual aids enhanced the presentation	5 4 3 2 1 0
7.	The presentation should have been longer	5 4 3 2 1 0

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE PRESENTATION ON A SCALE OF:
1(poor) to 5(excellent). Circle one..... 1 2 3 4 5

Additional comments and/or suggestions.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!!

EVALUATION OF INSERVICE

1. What do you consider the most important things you learned in this session?

2. What were the high and low points for you?

   High:

   Low:

3. As a result of this session what things do you think you will do differently?

4. Generally, how did you feel about the program?

5. Further comments:

APPENDIX B

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